

Wellesley Board of Health
CONFERENCE CALL – ZOOM
Meeting Minutes
September 23, 2020
10:00 AM

Present:

Board:

Shepard Cohen, MPA, Chair
Marcia Testa Simonson, MPH, PhD, Vice Chair
Linda Oliver Grape, PA-C, MPH, Secretary

Staff:

Deadra Doku-Gardner, Administrator
Leonard Izzo, Director
Cheryl Lefman, Community Health Coordinator
Ann Marie McCauley, Public Health Nurse Supervisor
Joyce Saret, Senior Community Social Worker
Vivian Zeng, Senior Environmental Health Specialist

In attendance:

Linda Chow, Chair, Wellesley School Committee
Linda Corridan, Nursing Director, Wellesley Public Schools
Sharon Gray, Wellesley School Committee
Katey Goehringer, Wellesley Education Foundation
David Lussier, Superintendent, Wellesley Public Schools
Beth Sullivan Woods, Board of Selectmen

The meeting was called to order at 10:35 am.

Citizen Speak

No one was in attendance that wished to participate in Citizen Speak.

The following minutes were reviewed and approved by the Board of Health:
August 12, August 13, August 17 and September 9, 2020.

1. Administration

a) Wellesley Public School (WPS)– Reopening Update

Linda Chow and David Lussier reported that WPS opened remotely last Wednesday, September 16, 2020. Schools will transition to the hybrid model on October 1, 2020. Dr. Lussier reviewed the three planned cohorts. Cohorts A and B will attend school remotely two days per week and two days in the classroom. The entire district will be on remote learning on Wednesdays. The third cohort, approximately 500 families, have opted to engage completely in remote learning until January 2021. After January 2021 there may be a need to offer the remote option for the rest of the year.

Shepard Cohen inquired as to how children will start school and what the daily process will include. Linda Corridan reported there is a list of questions for parents to answer on a screening form for the schools. Temperatures will be taken at home before coming into the school. Parents will be asked if they are adhering to the state travel restrictions and if they have been in contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19.

b) Wellesley Public School (WPS)– Testing program

Katey Goehringer reviewed the Wellesley Public School COVID-19 screening/testing program, as well as the plan. Ms. Goehringer reported that there was a webinar yesterday for anyone who was interested in the planned testing. She presented a slide presentation (COVID Testing Plan 9-23 20, WEF).

Katey Goehringer reported on three types of testing/screening and the execution plan:

1) Student baseline testing

This screening is being funded by Wellesley Education Foundation (WEF). Boston Heart Diagnostics is the lab that will be conducting the actual testing and Rapid Reliable Testing will be completing the sample collection. The student screening/testing is scheduled to take place at the Municipal Light Plant (MLP) this Saturday, Sunday and Monday, 8a to 5p. All WPS Pre-K to grade 12 without symptoms will be screened with a nasal swab PCR test. This is being done on a voluntary basis. Results are expected within 24 hours of the samples arrival at the lab.

2) Staff baseline testing

This screening is being funded by a grant donation by Immune Observatory. This will be a saliva test done at each school. All staff and faculty are required to be tested. Testing will be conducted on 9/24 and 9/25/20.

3) Staff assurance testing will be done until Thanksgiving. This will be a PCR test. The contract is with Eurofins/Boston Heart Diagnostics. A percentage of the staff will be tested each week with the results expected within 24 hours of the specimen reaching the Rutgers, NJ lab (up to 72 hours from the time the PCR test was completed).

Ms. Goehringer reported that as of Monday, 2600 students had signed up for the screening. As of today, 80% of the student body have signed up. Ms. Goehringer reported that a survey will be generated that will ask those that have not been screened why they declined. Joyce Saret cited concern for those families who may not have transportation to the testing site. Dr. Lussier and the school committee members agreed that they will be able to provide assistance.

Lenny Izzo requested to see the final plan from the vendor to include traffic patterns, cleaning process and procedures during the clinic flow. Mr. Izzo would like to see specifics in regards to the MLP facility. Mr. Izzo will be attending a conference call scheduled for Thursday.

Ms. Goehringer reported that the vendor set up will begin at MLP at 8 p.m. on Friday night. Linda Oliver Grape inquired as to the plan for sanitizing the MLP garage following the screenings. Ms. Goehringer reported that there is a plan for sanitizing the garage and the vendor has a cleaning protocol between each test and will sanitize everything before they leave on Monday.

Linda Corridan reported that anyone testing positive is expected to be out of school for at least ten days for symptom resolution. As noted at previous meetings, positive cases are reported to the state MAVEN system and close contact protocols will be completed by the Health Department nursing staff. Marcia Testa Simonson stressed to the WPS and School Committee that this is a function of the Board of Health and it is the usual process of contact tracing and isolation.

Marcia Testa Simson reviewed various metrics noting there is no one formula of when schools would move all students to fully remote learning. She said the guidelines are already in place by DPH and DESE. Leonard Izzo, Ann Marie McCauley and Dr. Lussier will be working on specific Wellesley metrics to be in place before next Thursday.

Mr. Izzo reported that he has been reviewing the DESE documents released on 9/21/20. He found them to be very confusing with parts contradicting what they said in earlier releases. DESE has been behind in their updates.

c) Wellesley Public School – Ventilation Filters

Linda Oliver Grape inquired as to the status of the MERV filters. David Lussier reported they have not yet arrived. Beth Sullivan Woods said she believes they will arrive in early November.

d) Human Resources

Leonard Izzo will be meeting with Human Resources to review the environmental health salary. Once the salary is finalized, they will be able to make an offer to the candidate.

2. Community Health

a) COVID-19 update

Ann Marie McCauley reported one new case (of a resident) since yesterday. There have been no new cases in the long-term care facilities.

In the past five months there have only been a handful of kids under age 21 (who have tested positive) and the majority are not in this community.

b) Newton Wellesley Hospital (NWH) - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Shepard Cohen reported on the memorandum of understanding between the City of Newton and NWH. Mr. Cohen reported that Wellesley will be

able to have the same MOU with the hospital. Mr. Cohen reported that if a Wellesley resident has no insurance coverage, the town would be responsible for the \$144 charge. This is an MOU for symptomatic testing and identified close contacts and would be for Wellesley residents and students only.

c) Fusion Fitness and Recreation Classes

Shepard Cohen reported he received a complaint from former board member Dr. Erika Johnson regarding the lack of mask use during recreation classes.

d) Linden Square

Lenny Izzo reported on a mother's group that would like to hold a pumpkin decorating event in conjunction with the management of Linden Square. Leonard Izzo said it can be done but needs to be more organized – with registration and seating arrangements etc.

e) Parental and Children Concerns

Beth Sullivan Woods is concerned that parents don't know how to handle their children for social activities noting that the Selectmen's office is receiving multiple complaints about Wellesley students. The majority of complaints are coming from adults passing by the fields and seeing groups of kids without masks.

Joyce Saret said she is concerned about kids experiencing social isolation and connecting with their friends. Whatever they have been doing thru the summer is what they are doing now. Beth Sullivan Woods would like the health department to provide guidance to parents.

f) Flu Clinics

Deadra Doku Gardner announced that three drive-thru community flu vaccination clinics have been scheduled in mid-October. The clinics will be conducted at the Municipal Light Plant garage.

3. Environmental Health

a) Food Establishments

Vivian Zeng reported on the Massachusetts Department of Public Health call of September 22, 2020. It was reported that effective Monday September 28, 2020, bar and bar seating will become available across the

state. She is working closely with the Board of Selectmen to get the message out. Most locations in Wellesley will have to make physical adjustments to their space to adhere to the new guidelines.

Ms. Zeng also reported that indoor dining capacity has increased from 6 to 10 people.

The next meeting of the Board of Health is scheduled for Tuesday, September Wednesday, September 29, 2020, 10 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 1p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Deadra Doku Gardner
Administrator

Documents reviewed during this meeting and on-file in the Health Department:

- 9/23/2020 Covid-19 testing update, WEF